

GOOD

NUTRITION

the new
Master-key
to Health

ONE PENNY

FOREWORD

BY

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THIS pamphlet contains simple truths very clearly stated. I trust that those to whom it appeals will read it with sympathy and belief. To mothers in particular it provides guidance which if followed will give the happiness of possessing healthier children and of earning the gratitude of the coming generation.

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Good Nutrition

The new Master-key to Health

Food is a simple matter to understand. Some say it is a difficult matter, best left to scientists and doctors. That is nonsense. Science helps to explain things simply, in order that we may keep fit by its aid and so see as little of the doctor as possible.

Others say that we know all about food already. But the same was once said about the care of babies ; and consider how much additional knowledge many women have now gained from classes on the nursing, feeding and care of children. We no longer believe the old lady who tells us that *she* ought to know about bringing up babies because she has buried six of them already.

It is as well to learn some facts about FOOD, since after all we have to eat it every day and it becomes part of ourselves and is the basis of life and health.

FOOD THAT GIVES US STRENGTH, ENERGY AND WARMTH

We are always doing *something*. Even when we are asleep we are still breathing and our heart is still beating. How does the body keep going ? With fuel, of course ; and this fuel is FOOD.

The harder we work, the harder we play, the more food we require to eat. That is to say, the more FUEL our bodies need.

What kinds of FOOD give us this fuel for energy and warmth ? The answer is very simple. *All kinds of food* provide us with fuel. But we obtain most of it just where we should expect—from the kinds of FOOD of which we eat the most and which we know are, on the whole, the cheapest foods. These are bread, potatoes, rice, margarine, beans, dripping, and so on.

Now, *if this were all that mattered*, it would be very simple. It would be hardly worth talking about food at all. All we should need would be a good plateful of these foods whenever we felt hungry.

BUT THERE IS MUCH MORE.

Consider. We may want to work hard and play hard ; but we must have well-built, well-knit bodies, firm muscles and strong bodily organs to do so. *Food has to build up the bodies of our children and to keep our own bodies in repair.*

That is the second great thing ; and it is even more important in a way. For a badly built weakly body cannot use the fuel-food properly.

Now we come to the lesson we all must learn.

Every kind of food gives us energy and warmth.

Only some kinds of food build and repair our bodies.

That is the difference.

FOODS THAT BUILD AND REPAIR THE BODY

A baby grows for several months on milk. Obviously, then, milk contains much of this body-building power. A chick grows in the egg ; so that the white and yolk of eggs must also contain much of the good substance. Cheese is made from milk and is one of the best and cheapest body-building foods obtainable.

From meat and fish, especially fish roes and fat fish such as herrings, we get the body-building substance.

Milk, eggs, cheese, meat, fish—all these are animal products. Do we then get none of the body-building substance from vegetables ? Certainly. We find it in bread and cereals, peas and beans, potatoes and nuts. But the animal foods are the more valuable. A smaller quantity of them goes a much longer way in building and repairing. They are more easily digested and made use of by the body. Also the animal foods are often more tasty.

To build and repair the body it is best to have a *mixed diet* of these different kinds of food, both animal and vegetable. The vegetable foods seem somehow to do us more good when mixed with animal foods, such as fish or cheese, than they do when taken alone. Their quality is improved, as it were.

☐ MILK, as one would suppose, is the most valuable food we have.

FOODS THAT PROTECT THE BODY

Now we come to the third great lesson. All foods give us energy and warmth. Some of these foods are essential for building and repair. And there are SOME FOODS that PROTECT us from all manner of diseases and infirmities. These are absolutely necessary. What is the use of stoking up our bodies with fuel, if at the same time we let them get sickly and ill merely through not eating the foods that protect them ?

First let us consider the kind of diseases and illnesses from which we can protect ourselves and our children. And in considering them, let us remember that this is no matter of doctors or medicine. It is simply a question of following a few rules about food. This is the marvellous discovery of the scientists ; and it is why the study of FOOD is the new master-key to HEALTH.

Anæmia. So many women—and children, too—grow anæmic. Their blood is not so good as it should be. They become tired and catch infectious diseases much more easily than they should. That is because they do not take enough of the right kind of food.

Rickets. Sometimes the bones of children grow weak and bent. This is worse in the large smoky towns, but there is always danger of it. Even in slight cases the children may grow up with a much greater tendency to chest troubles. And this, too, is due solely to lack of the proper food.

Scurvy. This is an unpleasant illness from which many babies used to suffer. It makes their skin and gums very sensitive and may upset their digestion.

Then there are *chest troubles, colds, pneumonia, bronchitis* and all these unpleasant illnesses. It is very probable that once again, if we do not take the right kinds of food, the delicate linings of our throats and breathing organs can grow weak and so are a little more liable to infection.

Further, there are a number of skin troubles, such as *boils* and the napkin *rashes* common among babies, *bad skin*, and certain *eye-weaknesses*, that are all due in some degree to the lack of the foods that would protect us from them.

Lastly, *teeth*—what a trouble they are ! But much of the trouble of decaying teeth and of the dentist would be prevented if we saw to it that we never lacked the food that helps to build sound teeth.

That is a long list. Now turn to the bright side and study the

FOODS THAT PROTECT US.

Why do the doctors recommend cod-liver oil for the children ? It is because cod-liver oil provides just that substance that protects the children from rickets.

Why do the doctors tell us to give the babies a little orange juice daily ? It is because orange juice contains just that substance that will protect the babies from scurvy.

Thus we understand immediately that these are simple protective foods. That is easily learned.

To prevent anæmia we need, especially, green vegetables—cabbages, spinach, salad vegetables. They all contain IRON. So do egg-yolk, liver, oatmeal and meat.

To prevent rickets and decay of the teeth our children need milk, and later cheese, egg-yolk and green vegetables. All these contain the substance for building sound bones and teeth. In addition the babies and young children should keep in the sunlight as much as possible. They should be given their doses of cod-liver oil as ordered by the doctor and later fish every week, if you can obtain it. Someone has called cod-liver oil “ bottled sunshine.”

To prevent infectious throat troubles and skin troubles as far as possible, take enough butter, fish, liver, eggs and salads, including carrots and tomatoes.

Thus we have eggs and liver helping us against anæmia and bad skin and eyes. Green vegetables also do this and in addition help to keep our teeth sound. Fish, especially fat fish, fish liver and roes, give us sound teeth and are good for building our muscles and bodily organs.

MILK—HERRINGS—GREEN VEGETABLES

We want an *AI* Nation. That means that folk must be sturdy, not easily tired out, with strong bones and good teeth and able to

resist the infectious diseases. Consider the foods we have mentioned above as helping us to become A1.

There are *Dairy Foods*—milk, cheese, butter, eggs.

Fish—especially fat fish and fish roes.

Green vegetables—especially salad vegetables.

Only liver, carrots and tomatoes are left over, of all the protective foods we mentioned.

So that milk, herrings, green vegetables go far towards being a true master-key to an A1 Nation. That is all very well, you may say. There are many villages where there is not enough fresh milk, strange though it may seem to the town-dweller ; and there must be many more villages that rarely see cheap fish. That is what we have to discuss. After all, the Institutes have solved difficult problems in the past ; and why should they not take the lead in this question of proper food ?

What then must we eat ?

It is clear at any rate, from all we have said, that we must have *varied kinds* of food. You can no more keep a body fit on one or two kinds of food than you can build a house all of tiles or all of mortar.

Take BABIES first of all. Here we will follow what Dr. Leslie Harris of Cambridge has to say. He says that of course the basis of the food must be mother's milk or else milk made as like mother's milk as possible. Then all babies should have a little cod-liver oil or whatever the doctor recommends instead. Finally, all babies should have orange juice daily. We saw *why* they should have cod-liver oil and orange juice. It is to *protect* them from rickets and scurvy. For in this way they can get all the good out of the milk they take.

At weaning the baby may grow anæmic. This might be so, if his mother was anæmic before the baby was born. In such a case he could be given, in addition to his other food, some food suggested by the doctor, to which the right amount of IRON had been added ; and very often babies treated like this improve immediately.

Then we will consider the needs of the EXPECTANT MOTHER. Professor S. J. Cowell of London is the authority we will follow. He says that to help in the making of the baby's bones, while keeping her own strong, the mother should try to include eggs and butter in her diet and should get out in the sunshine whenever possible. It is also, he says, really worth while to take two or three teaspoons of cod-liver oil every day during the last three months before the baby is born. Green vegetables (no soda to be added in the cooking) and salads will ensure good blood for both mother and child. A good helping of these should be eaten every day. The eating of liver, say once or twice a week, during the last four months before the baby's birth is very advisable. He also adds that the mother should include a quart of milk a day, one egg a day, a liberal serving of green salads and vegetables every day, fresh fruit every day, sea-fish once or twice a week.

This professor says, in the little leaflet he wrote for the National Baby Week Council, that he fears some may not be able to afford the diet he suggests. But there are the facts ; and we must simply consider how the Institutes can, co-operatively perhaps, overcome some of the difficulties.

As to the GROWING CHILD, Professor V. H. Mottram of London has said that he would like to see at least a pint of milk in the daily diet of each child. In addition he would like to see from two to four ounces a day, according to age, of either meat, cheese or fish in the diet. They will give all that is needed as regards body-building. Then he adds that, if a child has a helping of raw salads or greens or carrots every day, he will be doing as well as most children in the country. So long as a child has plenty of rest and fresh air, his appetite will tell you how much he needs of the fuel foods—bread, suet pudding, potatoes and so forth.

A GROWN MAN requires of course the body-repairing foods and the foods to protect the body from illness, as we all do. But he needs more in proportion of the fuel foods, owing to the amount of work he has to do. It would be a good rule to give him daily a pint of milk if he will take it, one or two ounces of butter, a serving of green salad, a helping of green-leaf vegetables, an orange or a tomato, herring or fish roes once a week or oftener—possibly liver once a week. Then for keeping the body in repair, good helpings of cheese or meat.

To provide the man with the energy he needs one can give him plentiful bread, potatoes, butter, margarine. Sugar, dried fruits and peas are also good sources of energy. Full supplies of pastry, scones and such appetising food will keep him going as cheaply and as comfortably as anything.

MILK—FISH—GREEN VEGETABLES

Let us just quote what Lady Denman said in her broadcast on November 8th last. "With regard to herrings," she said, "the consumption has gone down seriously in the last few years, and for that and for other reasons the fishermen and their families are in a very bad way. I would suggest that in some villages it would be possible to buy the herrings co-operatively through the Women's Institutes and to distribute them to their members."

And Professor Mottram said recently in *Home and Country* : "England is most fitted for producing milk and milk products and market-garden produce. The diet experts want you to consume milk and milk products, market-garden produce and herrings. Isn't it time you women pushed Parliament into doing something about it ? "

The difficulty of cheap fresh fish in the villages is not a simple one, but it can be tackled. Buying co-operatively would mean a large enough order to obtain the herrings at cheap or wholesale prices from the nearest town ; if this were successful, there is no reason why other problems of cheap marketing should not be solved.

Then there are the CHILDREN to think of. We know that there are in the country districts children who do not get as much milk as they ought to have, or who live so far from school that they do not get a proper midday meal. Some schools do provide a canteen dinner and some have begun to provide milk ; but cannot more be done ?

I should like to quote from a doctor in a country district, Dr. A. M. Critchley. He tells us of one head-teacher in West Suffolk who found that many children went short at midday and so grew tired during afternoon school. He started a scheme for hot midday meals with meat, vegetables and pudding.

These meals are cooked on the school fire by two of the girls. The village baker cooks the roast meat free of charge. The school garden provides the vegetables.

This seems a good plan ; and though there are likely to be difficulties, is there any reason why the Institutes should not overcome them, as they have overcome others in the past ?

Let us try to sum it all up.

You need not worry at all, if your family is getting a fair *mixed diet*—bread and potatoes and sugar, green and salad vegetables and a little fruit, cheese and a bit of meat, liver and fish where possible in the week, all the milk you can afford.

It is the duty of the Institutes to discuss how to improve matters for their members month by month and year by year. This means planning how to purchase for the members more fresh milk, more fish, especially herrings and fat fish. It means studying the midday meals of the children at the schools. It means above all perhaps seeing that our expectant mothers can be provided, maybe through joint and co-operative effort, with extra milk and a little extra liver, green vegetables and fish (if they seem to be going short of these foods themselves).

Often there are problems how best to store the food and how best to prepare it and make it appetising. Often, too, food we should like seems quite beyond our means. Yes, these problems are there and we all know they are there.

But quiet discussion does much towards solving problems. We have often succeeded in the past. We shall succeed in the future.

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